Composition Recital

new works by

David Mitchell

Candidate for the Master of Music degree

Sunday, December 3, 2000 at 3:00 pm

Convocation Hall,
Arts Building,
University of Alberta

Arts Building
University of Alberta

Program

Department of Music
University of Alberta

Pianos: Around C

Corey Hamm - piano
Roger Admiral - piano

Void

Georgina Williams - alto
Darren Sahl - clarinet
SarahBeth Steed - cello
Ondrea Fehr - organ

Musica Arco

Carolina Giesbrecht - violin
Ken Heise - violin
David Mitchell - viola
Sarahbeth Steed - cello

Drum M

saxophone:
Jessica Dyck
Marshall Tindall
Scott Campbell

eωe drums:
Kristin Dahle
Joe Vos
Keith Yasheydo
Lindsay Cochrane
Ruston Vuori
Gerrard MacKinnon
Dave Mitchell
Chrissie-Jane Cronje
Mary Weng
Mark Hannesson

This recital is presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Music degree for Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Mitchell is a recipient of the Violet Archer Graduate Scholarship in Musical Composition and a Beryl Barns Memorial Award (Graduate)

Reception to follow in the Arts Lounge

Void

There is a black hole in my soul
Vacancy devoid of light
Empty of deed
Empty of thought
Empty of love
Void of existence

There is a black stain in my soul
Thick black tarnish that spreads dark spores
Empty of deed
Empty of thought
Empty of love
Void of existence

It spreads
Infecting
It appears unexpected with reaching tendrils of void space to grow more intimately conjoined
It touches here and I am nothing
It reaches there and I am contained
Undone
I can not be

There is a black mark deep within
Dense and dark as ancient blood
Empty of deed
Empty of thought
Empty of love
Void of existence

There is a black hole in my soul
Emptiness that swallows light
Empty of deed
Empty of thought
Empty of love
Void of existence

Acid burning black pits
Uncontained
Clinging
Stealing vision
Eroding my horizons

A black hollow
Always there
Hungry
Devouring
Infinite gravity
It draws me to its brink
an event-less horizon
I feed it pieces of myself

How can I resist
How can I stop this nothing within
Who can avoid the creeping ghostly shadows of dusk

Pianos: Around C

This work is loosely based on an additive system consisting of groups of notes that range from repeated eighth notes to long arpeggiated upward flourishes. The eighth note pulse is constant and relentless. As the groupings of notes are all of varying length; the pianos shift in and out of phase, both competing and co-operating to create a rich and complex tapestry of sound. This kinetic material, limited in pitch and compass, is interrupted by contrasting material. This new material is very static at the level of pulse, only showing its direction in large scale time; an important element of this section is the sound of the natural decay of a vibrating piano string.

Void

The text, I believe, speaks for itself. In the music, I have tried to embody the sense of absence, apathy or void as a looming, very solid and tangible presence. I have done this through the use of drones, a pitch row, and an obscure deconstructionist pitch inversion system. The drones are centred on A, and the vocal line is centred on A flat to provide an enduring sense of tension throughout the work.

Musica Arco

This work, scored for a retuned string quartet, draws on many disparate elements. The retuning of the instruments allows the use of close drones in a manner reminiscent of Norwegian tradition of halling fiddling. The musical material is predominantly dynamic and dance-like, but in a constantly changing, asymmetric meter. I have employed am additive approach to meter in much of this work, in which beats arise as groupings of pulses, rather than the divisive system typically employed by western music in which beats generate pulses through subdivision. This dynamic material is contrasted by quieter sections, employing harmonics to create a thin, somewhat discordant sound.

Drum M

This work springs from my experience performing in an ensemble using these traditional ewe instruments and the associated repertoire. This work strives to capture some of the dynamic and performer-oriented aspects of traditional ewe Drums. The material is presented to the performers as a series of cells or rhythmic patterns. The performers then play each cell as frequently as they wish, but performers are not permitted to return to a previous cell once they have moved on. In other sections, the lead drum performs signals that require the performers to change patterns in a coordinated manner. The first section of the work is based on a rhythmic pattern similar in character to the drum Gahu. The middle section takes a very different turn, presenting a rhythm in 15/8.

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without musicians interested in performing new music
being a composer looses its meaning

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